BOARD OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES 39375 COUNTY HIGHWAY 24 MORTON, MN 56270 THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 2025

AGENDA

9:00 AM CALL MEETING TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MINUTES OF JUNE 25, 2025 BOARD MEETING

PUBLIC ACCESS FORUM (10-minute agenda time, two-minute limit/person)

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

A conflict of interest, whether actual, potential, or perceived, occurs when someone in a position of trust has competing professional or personal interests, and these competing interests make it difficult to fulfill professional duties impartially. At this time, members are requested to declare conflicts of interest they may have regarding today's business. Any member who declares an actual_conflict of interest must not vote on that agenda item. All actual, potential, and perceived conflicts of interest will be announced to the board by members or staff before any vote.

REPORTS

- Chair & Administrative Advisory Committee Todd Holman
- Executive Director John Jaschke
- Audit & Oversight Committee Joe Collins
- Dispute Resolution and Compliance Report Travis Germundson/Rich Sve
- Grants Program & Policy Committee Mark Zabel
- RIM Reserve Committee Jayne Hager Dee
- Water Management & Strategic Planning Committee Joe Collins
- Wetland Conservation Committee Jill Crafton
- Buffers, Soils & Drainage Committee LeRoy Ose
- Drainage Work Group Neil Peterson/Tom Gile

AGENCY REPORTS

- Minnesota Department of Agriculture Brad Redlin Jordahl
- Minnesota Department of Health Steve Robertson
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Sarah Strommen
- Minnesota Extension Joel Larson
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Glenn Skuta

ADVISORY COMMENTS

- Association of Minnesota Counties Brian Martinson
- Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees Mike Schultz
- Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts LeAnn Buck

- Minnesota Association of Townships Eunice Biel
- Minnesota Watersheds Jan Voit
- Natural Resources Conservation Service Troy Daniell

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Grants Program and Policy Region Committee

- 1. FY26-27 Technical Service Area Grants Adam Beilke **DECISION ITEM**
- 2. Natural Resources Block Grants Adam Beilke **DECISION ITEM**
- 3. FY26-27 Soil and Water Conservation District Conservation Delivery and Conservation Contracts Grants— Adam Beilke **DECISION ITEM**
- 4. Area II Floodplain Management Grants- Adam Beilke **DECISION ITEM**
- 5. FY26-27 Watershed Based Implementation Funding Julie Westerlund **DECISION ITEM**
- 6. BWSR Grants Streamlining James Adkinson *INFORMATION ITEM*

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- RIM Reserve Committee is scheduled for September 5, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. in St. Paul and by MS Teams.
- BWSR Board meeting is scheduled for September 24, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. in St. Paul and by MS Teams.

ADJOURN



Irrigation workshop immerses NRCS, SWCD staff in new tech









YOUR Clean Water Fund AT WORK

A contribution agreement between BWSR (Clean Water Funds) and NRCS (Farm Bill) funds the Technical **Training and** Certification Program. The collaboration involves the Minnesota Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts and the Minnesota Association of Conservation **District** Employees.

TAPLES — With a focus on new and emerging technology, this summer's Irrigation Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Technical Training Workshop at Central Lakes College (CLC) deepened conservation professionals' understanding of options available to producers.

About 40 Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and soil and water conservation district (SWCD) staff attended the two-day training. An education component of the \$3.5 million RCPP grant NRCS awarded to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) in 2021, this was the third year the workshop was offered.

The intent: Equip staff to work with irrigators who receive precision irrigation cost-share through the RCPP. An \$11.2 million RCPP renewal announced this summer will support another round of upgrades meant to increase irrigation water-use efficiency, and improve groundwater and surface water quality. Details are expected to be announced late this fall once project partner agreements are in place.

The workshop set NRCS and SWCD technicians on the path to obtaining Job Approval Authority



Minnesota NRCS website: www. mn.nrcs.usda.gov

(JAA). Technicians with JAA can certify practices. RCPP-supported practices require certification before the landowner can receive federal cost-share payments. Having

more JAA-certified technicians makes more technical assistance available to producers, and speeds the reimbursement process.

Industry experts, educators and producers delivered the training and answered questions. The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources' (BWSR) Technical Training and Certification Program (TTCP) helped coordinate the workshop.

Day 1 introduced information required to certify pumping plants, sprinkler systems and irrigation water management.

"Irrigation is complicated. There's a lot that goes into it," said Sherburne SWCD agricultural conservationist Miranda Wagner. A workshop steering committee member, she was also among the presenters at a station centered on certifying sprinkler systems for payment.

From left:

Uniformity testing was among the topics covered during a twoday irrigation workshop this summer at Central Lakes College in Staples. University of Minnesota-Extension irrigation specialist Vasu Sharma taught several sessions, including one focused on soilmoisture sensors and platforms. The workshop, in its third year, focused on new and emeraina technology. The goal: Prepare NRCS and SWCD staff members to work with producers seeking upgrades through the Regional Conservation **Partnership** Proaram.

Photo Credits: Amanda Deans, BWSR

"Even having a baseline education on the different components of what an operator is doing every day with irrigation — all the things that need to be considered when watering I think is an asset to the field office so that when an operator comes in, and we're talking about programming or even just technical assistance, we can give better guidance," Wagner said.

"Having that general idea of what's required for those practices also helps us work better with operators who are signing up. To me, it's the worstcase scenario if someone comes in and (you sign them up for a program), but you can't tell them what the deliverables are going to be," she said.

The Day 2 focus — an in-depth look at new technology — came at the request of past years' attendees.

It included demonstrations and discussions about variable-rate technologies, soil-moisture tracking methods, and whole-farm management software that incorporates irrigation data.

"You do have companies (that) are more than willing to talk about the new technology and what's in the market, but of course they do tend to focus on their own products," said Jeppe Kjaersgaard, an MDA research scientist who manages the RCPP grant.

"Having someone either from the (SWCD) or from NRCS that can talk a little more broadly about the different types of products in the marketplace ... is really important so that irrigators can make

When you are talking to an irrigator, you have to be able to talk shop.

Jeppe Kjaersgaard, Minnesota Department of Agriculture research scientist







Left: "To me, it's the worst-case scenario if someone comes in and (you sign them up for a program), but you can't tell them what the deliverables are going to be," said Miranda Wagner, a Sherburne SWCD agricultural conservationist who helped to organize the workshop and was among the presenters.

Right: "The technology is growing so fast, and the producer interest seems to be kind of growing along with it," said Kelly Berg, a Stearns Conservation District conservation planner who attended the workshop for the third year. Contributed Photos

informed decisions about investments in new technology," he said.

Kelly Berg attended all three workshops. A conservation planner with the Stearns Conservation District, she works with producers on best management practices, alerts them to funding opportunities, and offers technical assistance. Berg said she was particularly interested in the differences between soilmoisture probes and their compatibility with different brands of irrigators.

"The technology is growing so fast, and the producer interest seems to be kind of growing along with it," Berg said.

Kjaersgaard said the in-

depth sessions focused on technology that has emerged within the past couple of years — things early adopters are starting to use.

Vasu Sharma, a University of Minnesota-Extension irrigation specialist and assistant professor in the Department of Soil, Water and Climate, taught several sessions, including one focused on soil-moisture sensors and platforms. Her aim: Give technicians a complete understanding of that technology, and how to interpret the data it produces.

"If you have that instantaneous measurement, how (do you) make sense of what that (means for) irrigation?" Sharma said. "Then we also

looked at the graphs. If you have advanced technology — if you have a sensor that sends you data online and you can see it graphically — how to interpret that and how to make decisions based on that graphical data set."

Some of the technology such as cameras mounted on irrigators to immediately detect pest damage by showing changes in foliage color — is still in the trial stages.

"This (technology) is pretty intense, but it's also finding that economic point where it's applicable on smaller farms," Wagner said. "But (upgrades) can be simpler, like attaching flow meters ... as a tool for operators to know how their pump is functioning, how their system is functioning, and being more efficient with water and energy use."

Technicians can help producers determine the best options for their system.

While the workshop prepared technicians for those conversations — and propelled them closer to receiving JAA — Berg noted another advantage.

"If you're there at that workshop, it's because you're working on similar things. ... It's so nice to be able to talk to other planners or technicians that are kind of in the same boat as you, and bounce ideas off of each other," Berg said. "It's a really good networking and learning opportunity."

BWSR staff members write and produce Snapshots, a monthly newsletter highlighting the work of the agency and its partners.



With \$8 million in new funding, road bank program seeks restoration opportunities





he state's Local Government Road Wetland Replacement Program (LGRWRP) received \$8 million in new funding this year. These allocations will help the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources' (BWSR) pave the way for local road authorities to complete public road projects that affect wetlands while maintaining no net loss in wetland functions and values.

The LGRWRP received \$5 million in capital investment (bonding) funding plus \$3 million in state general fund dollars during the 2025 regular legislative session and a June 9 special session. Program staff plan to begin accepting applications later this fall through a request for proposals process.

Under Minnesota's Wetland Conservation Act (WCA), wetlands that are filled or drained must be replaced through a process called wetland mitigation. BWSR oversees the LGRWRP, which develops wetland mitigation banking credits by restoring previously drained or filled wetlands and adjacent uplands. Those credits are used to offset impacts to wetlands that occur when local road authorities — such as counties, cities or townships — repair, restore or replace public roads.

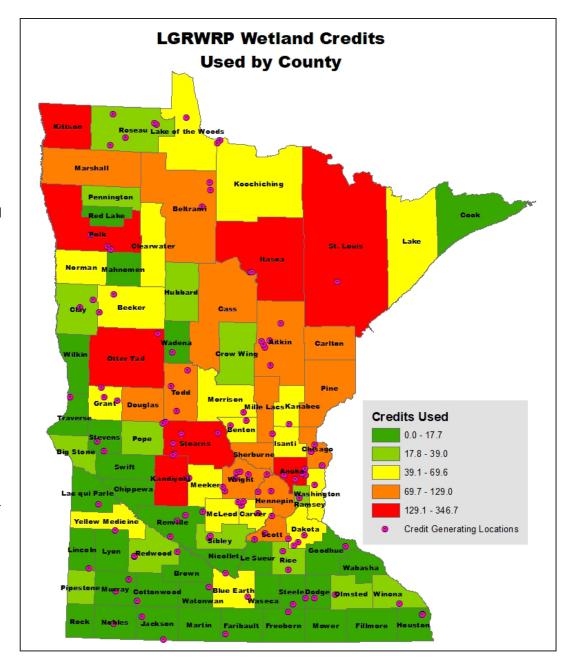
Before the LGRWRP was established in 1996, local road authorities were responsible for their own wetland mitigation.

"This program is a win-win for both wetland protection and essential road-related infrastructure projects," said Dennis Rodacker, BWSR wetland mitigation supervisor. "It takes the burden of wetland mitigation off of local road authorities, while also providing flexible options for participating landowners."

A wetland in Scott County is shown before (left) and after (right) restoration. The project was completed in fall 2019 via the state's Local Government Road Wetland Replacement Program. Photo and Map Credits: BWSR The program relies on landowners throughout Minnesota who are interested in restoring wetlands to their original condition. They have three options:

- Enroll land in a conservation easement and receive a per-acre payment. Under this option, BWSR funds and oversees all wetland restoration work, and receives all credits generated by the project.
- Pay for restoration costs themselves, and then sell any credits generated by the project to BWSR or on the private market
- Enter into a contract that specifies how restoration tasks and the associated credits generated are split between the landowner and BWSR.

Over the past three decades, the LGRWRP has helped restore more than 8.000 acres of wetlands and upland habitat. Wetlands restored through the program require five years of vegetation and hydrological monitoring by BWSR to document the development of site functions and sustainability. Through this process, more than 4.800 total wetland banking credits have been generated, with approximately 4,500 credits used by 10 Wetland Bank Service Areas (BSAs) to date. BSA boundaries align with Minnesota's major watershed basins. The program sees an average annual demand of 170 credits. Currently, BWSR has



approximately 325 available credits.

"It's really important for new projects to keep coming on board to support the local road authorities across the state," Rodacker said. "We hope this new funding will help drive interest in wetland restoration opportunities, allowing us to make sure enough credits are available for the road authorities."

Credit needs vary depending on BSA size, location and

how many restorable wetlands are present in the area.

Rodacker said that of the 10 BSAs, BSA 7 and BSA 9 have the greatest need for credits. BSA 7, also known as the Middle Mississippi Area, has a high volume of road projects requiring credits due to its location in the seven-county Twin Cities metro area. BSA 9, located in the southwest portion of the state and also known as the Minnesota

River Area, is the largest BSA in Minnesota, driving its demand for credits. Counties that have used the most credits since the program began include St. Louis, Anoka, Stearns, Kittson and Otter Tail.

More information about the upcoming LGRWRP RFP will be posted <u>here on BWSR's</u> website.

BWSR staff members write and produce Snapshots, a monthly newsletter highlighting the work of the agency and its partners.



Pomme de Terre priorities drive Grant County SWCD erosion fix









YOUR Clean Water Fund AT WORK

Clean Water
Funds from
BWSR are the
sole source of
Watershed-Based
Implementation
Funding.

OFFMAN — Situated a half-mile from the Pomme de Terre River, one of the largest erosion-control projects in Grant County installed 19 water and sediment control basins to help keep topsoil in the fields and pollution out of the nutrient-impaired river and Perkins Lake downstream in Stevens County.

Cooperating landowners and two rounds of Watershed-Based Implementation Funding (WBIF) from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) made the \$360,000 project possible. The Grant County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) coordinated the effort and received the funding — which covered 75% of landowners' costs — through the



There's multiple benefits for both the farmers and conservation. ...
Now they'll be able

to farm straight through (the repaired gullies).

Brent Gulbrandson,Grant County SWCD manager

Pomme de Terre River Association (PDTRA).

The project was a top priority for the watershed, which spans about 875 square miles across six counties.



Top: The erosion-

Photo Credits: Ann Wessel, BWSR





Work was underway at the Roseville Township site on Sept. 27, 2024, when a group gathered to discuss the project and its erosion control and water-quality benefits. They are, from left: Ryan Weegman of Red Rock Tiling & Excavating, Grant County SWCD Board Chairman Paul Groneberg, Grant County SWCD technician Tim Amundson, Pomme de Terre River Association Coordinator Sophia Maruska, landowner Vernon Haack, West Otter Tail SWCD-based engineering technician Mike Yrjo, BWSR Board Conservationist Pete Waller and Grant County SWCD Manager Brent Gulbrandson.

"The erosion ... (has) created extremely deep gullies and valleys. That not only causes problems for the farmer, because it limits the amount of field they can farm, but it also affects the river because as those valleys and gullies are formed, you have the risk of (sediment and the pollution it carries) getting into the watershed," said Sophia Maruska, PDTRA watershed coordinator.

The largest of the gullies measured 10 feet deep and 25 feet wide. Two others measured 7 feet or deeper and up to 15 feet wide.

Contractors hauled in 30,000 cubic yards of fill to fix the gullies and construct the berms that will temporarily hold water back for up to 24 hours, allowing sediment to settle out.

"There's multiple benefits for both the farmers and conservation. These gullies ... they're getting bigger and bigger each year," said Brent Gulbrandson, Grant County SWCD manager. "Now they'll be able to farm straight through them, for the most part. Some of the embankments are farmable. Some of them (are) grassed just due to the steepness of the terrain, but then they can farm around (the basins), which is much easier than (working around) the gullies."

Vernon Haack raises about 500 acres of corn and soybeans in Roseville Township. Twelve water and sediment control basins — sometimes referred to as dikes — were installed in his 180-acre field. Seven more were installed in a neighbor's 40-acre field.

"We put most of the water underground before it hits the hilly areas where it washes out," Haack said. "The dikes should take care of most of the overland running of the water that we get with the big rain events."

Gulbrandson described why this site was a priority and how the WBIF-supported work would help to improve water quality.

"The heavy rains they've been getting — exceeding 2, 3, 4 inches of rain in 24 hours — have caused a lot of sediment to wash across the fields, through a culvert and into the Pomme de Terre River, a high-priority resource for the county," he said. "With these sed(iment) basins, we're going to eliminate or minimize any sediment from washing in as well as the fertilizers and chemicals."

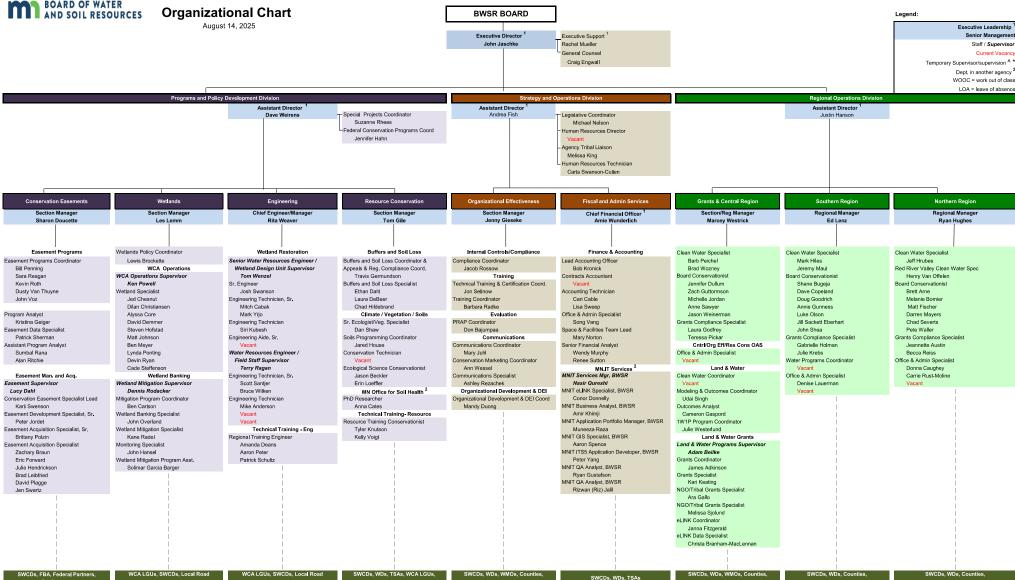
Kensington-based Red Rock Tiling & Excavating completed the work in October 2024. The SWCD also tapped West Otter Tail SWCD engineering technician Mike Yrjo to survey, design and help oversee construction of the water and sediment control basins.

"The biggest challenge on this project has been the design work, with just its scope and how large it is," Yrjo said. "It's the largest project I've worked on in my 18 years."

The project had been in the discussion stages for about 10 years. Working out the design and securing funds took about two years.

"We've been wanting to do this for a long time, but now it worked out with the financing," Haack said. "My daughter is looking at taking over the farm, so it'll be a good project for her to move on with. ... My daughter will have a better time of it."

BWSR staff members write and produce Snapshots, a monthly newsletter highlighting the work of the agency and its partners.



BWSR Board Member Conflict of Interest in Grant Review – Disclosure Form

Meeting:			Date:	e:							
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FI-00529-09 (11/13) Page **1** of **2**

EMPLOYEE EXPENSE REPORT (Instructions)

DO NOT PAY RELOCATION EXPENSES ON THIS FORM.

See form FI-00568 Relocation Expense Report. Relocation expenses must be sent to Minnesota Management & Budget, Statewide Payroll Services, for payment.

USE OF FORM: Use the form for the following purposes:

- 1. To reimburse employees for authorized travel expenses.
- 2. To request and pay all travel advances.
- 3. To request reimbursement for small cash purchases paid for by employees.

COMPLETION OF THE FORM: Employee: Complete, in ink, all parts of this form. If claiming reimbursement, enter actual amounts you paid, not to exceed the limits set in your bargaining agreement or compensation plan. If you do not know these limits, contact your agency's business expense contact. Employees must submit an expense report within 60 days of incurring any expense(s) or the reimbursement comes taxable.

All of the data you provide on this form is public information, except for your home address. You are not legally required to provide your home address, but the state of Minnesota cannot process certain mileage payments without it.

	Ea	rn Code		Earn Code			
Description	In State	Out of State	Description	In State	Out of State		
Advance	ADI	ADO	Membership	MEM			
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Baggage Handling	BGI	BGO	Mileage < or = IRS Rate	MLI MLO			
Car Rental	CRI	CRO	Network Services	NWK			
Clothing Allowance		CLA	Other Expenses	OEI	OEO		
Clothing-Non Contract		CLN	Parking	PKI	PKO		
Communications - Other		COM	Photocopies	CPI	CPO		
Conference/Registration Fee	CFI	CFO	Postal, Mail & Shipping Svcs.(outbound)	PMS			
Department Head Expense		DHE	Storage of State Property	STO			
Fax	FXI	FXO	Supplies/Materials/Parts	SMP			
Freight & Delivery (inbound)		FDS	Telephone, Business Use	BPI	BPO		
Hosting		HST	Telephone, Personal Use	PHI	PHO		
Laundry	LDI	LDO	Training/Tuition Fee	TRG			
Lodging	LGI	LGO	Taxi/Airport Shuttle	TXI	TXO		
Meals With Lodging	MWI	MWO	Vest Reimbursement	VST			
Meals Without Lodging	MEI*	MEO*	Note: * = taxable, taxed at supplemental rates				

Supervisor: Approve the correctness and necessity of this request in compliance with existing bargaining agreements or compensation plans and all other applicable rules and policies. Forward to the agency business expense contact person, who will then process the payments. Note: The expense report form must include original signatures.

Final Expense For This Trip?: Check this box if there will be no further expenses submitted for this trip. By doing this, any outstanding advance balance associated with this trip will be deducted from the next paycheck that is issued.

1-Way Commute Miles: Enter the number of miles from your home to your permanent workstation.

Expense Group ID: Entered by accounting or payroll office at the time of entering expenses. The Expense Group ID is a unique number that is system-assigned. It will be used to reference any advance payment or expense reimbursement associated with this trip.

Earn Code: Select an Earn Code from the list that describes the expenses for which you are requesting reimbursement. Be sure to select the code that correctly reflects whether the trip is in state or out-of-state. **Note**: Some expense reimbursements may be taxable.

Travel Advances, Short-Term and Recurring: An employee can only have one outstanding advance at a time. An advance must be settled before another advance can be issued.

Travel Advance Settlement: When the total expenses submitted are less than the advance amount or if the trip is cancelled, the employee will owe money to the state. Except for rare situations, personal checks will not be accepted for settlement of advances; a deduction will be taken from the employee's paycheck.

FMS ChartStrings: Funding source(s) for advance or expense(s)

Mileage: Use the Mileage Reimbursement Calculation table to figure your mileage reimbursement. Mileage may be authorized for reimbursement to the employee at one of three rates (referred to as the equal to, less than, or greater than rate). The rates are specified in the applicable bargaining agreement/compensation plan. Note: If the mileage rate you are using is above the IRS rate at the time of travel (this is not common), part of the mileage reimbursement will be taxed.

Vehicle Control #: If your agency assigns vehicle control numbers follow your agency's internal policy and procedure. Contact your agency's business expense contact for more information on the vehicle control number procedure.

Personal Travel Benefits: State employees and other officials cannot accept personal benefits resulting from travel on state business as their own. These benefits include frequent flyer miles/points and other benefits (i.e. discounts issued by lodging facilities.) Employees must certify that they have not accepted personal travel benefits when they apply for travel reimbursement.

Receipts: Attach itemized receipts for all expenses except meals, taxi services, baggage handling, and parking meters, to this reimbursement claim. The Agency Designee may, at its option, require attachment of meal receipts as well. Credit card receipts, bank drafts, or cancelled checks are not allowable receipts.

Copies and Distribution: Submit the original document for payment and retain a copy for your employee records.

FI-00529-09 (11/13) Page **2** of **2**